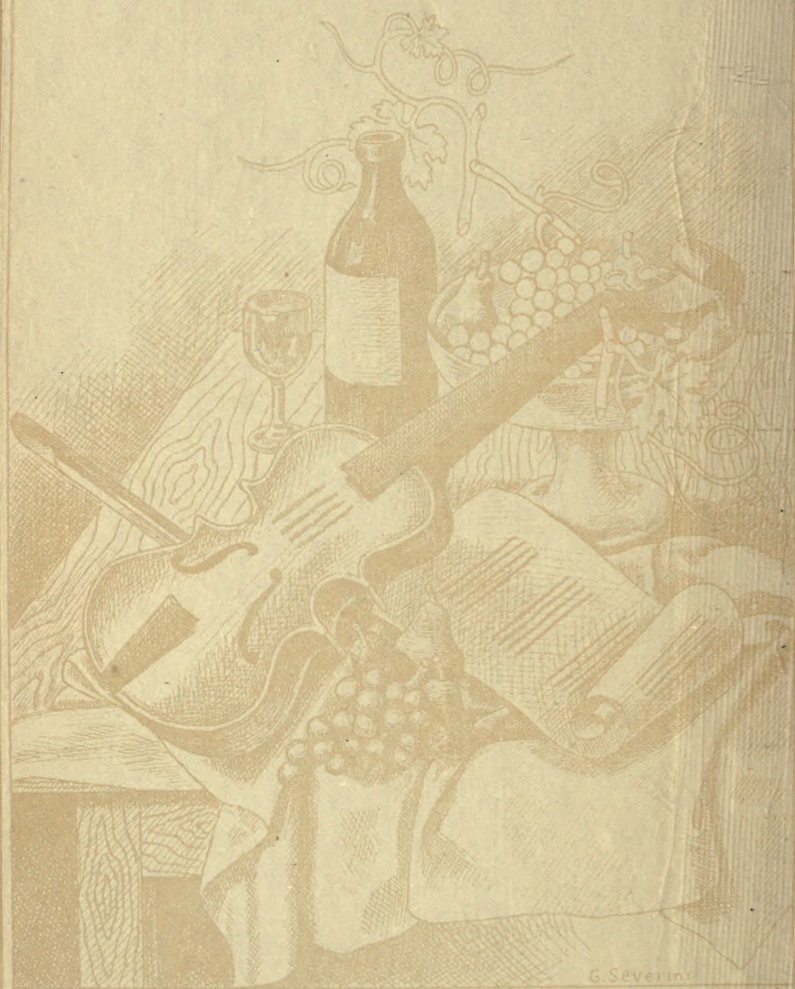





edited by  
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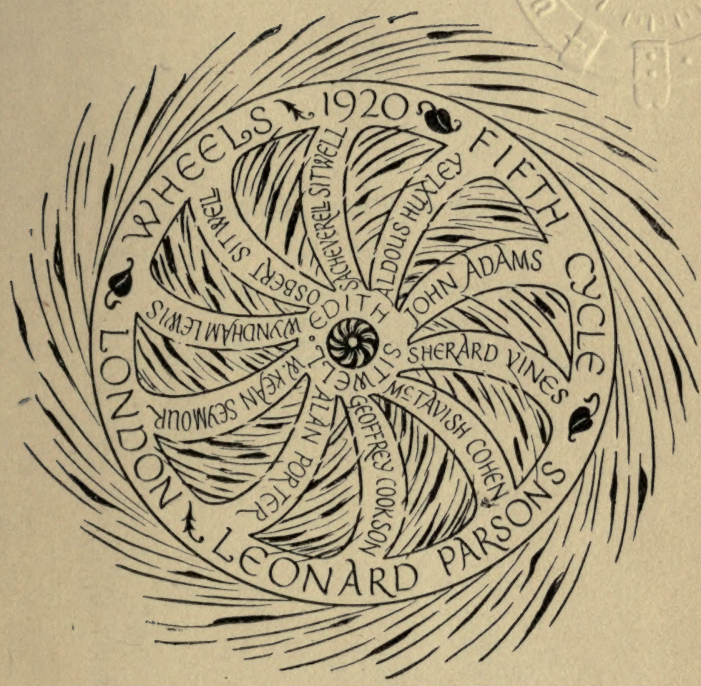
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*Leonard Parsons, Ltd.,*

WE DEDICATE THIS BOOK

TO

MRS. ARNOLD BENNETT

(MADEMOISELLE HÉBRARD)

POETRY'S GREATEST INTERPRETATIVE ARTIST.



# CONTENTS



	PAGE
<i>OSBERT SITWELL</i>	
CORNUCOPIA . . . . .	9
CHURCH PARADE . . . . .	12
SUNDAY AFTERNOON . . . . .	14
DE LUXE:	
I. HYMN . . . . .	18
II. NURSERY RHYME . . . . .	19
AT THE HOUSE OF MRS. KINFOOT . . . . .	22
MALGRÉ LUI . . . . .	25
FRAGMENT FROM "THE VALLEY OF THE GIANTS" . . . . .	28
MRS. FREUDENTHAL CONSULTS THE WITCH OF ENDOR . . . . .	30
<i>ALDOUS HUXLEY</i>	
THEATRE OF VARIETIES . . . . .	33
<i>ALAN PORTER</i>	
HARD OF HEARING . . . . .	39
LOVERS . . . . .	41
BLIND . . . . .	42
<i>LEAH McTAVISH COHEN</i>	
CHILD'S SONG . . . . .	43
<i>GEOFFREY COOKSON</i>	
TIME . . . . .	44
MIST AND CLOUD . . . . .	45
EDEN . . . . .	47
PORPHYRO . . . . .	49
THE CROCODILE DISCOURSES . . . . .	52

# CONTENTS—*continued.*

	PAGE
<i>WILLIAM KEAN SEYMOUR</i>	
THE AMBUSH . . . . .	54
STARS . . . . .	55
THE FLAME . . . . .	56
SRAMOZAN . . . . .	57
<i>SACHEVERELL SITWELL</i>	
"LAUGHING LIONS WILL COME" . . . . .	60
ET IN ARCADIA, OMNES . . . . .	67
A SWISS RHAPSODY . . . . .	80
<i>JOHN J. ADAMS</i>	
PROFITEER WILLIAMSON PURSUES CULTURE . . . . .	83
CAFÉ CONFIDENCES . . . . .	85
<i>SHERARD VINES</i>	
IMMANENCE . . . . .	87
THE KING'S DAUGHTER . . . . .	89
LOVE LYRIC . . . . .	90
THE DAHLIA . . . . .	91
THE SOUL'S DEFENCE . . . . .	92
<i>EDITH SITWELL</i>	
THE TOILETTE OF MYRRHINE . . . . .	94
EIGHT MORE BUCOLIC POEMS:	
I. EVENING . . . . .	97
II. THE FIVE MUSICIANS . . . . .	99
III. KING COPHETUA AND THE BEGGAR MAID . . . . .	102
IV. CLOWN ARGHEB'S SONG . . . . .	104
V. FLEECING TIME . . . . .	105
VI. THE HIGHER SENSUALISM . . . . .	107
VII. FALSETTO SONG . . . . .	109
VIII. THE FAT WOMAN . . . . .	110
PRESS CUTTINGS . . . . .	113
BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	117

## CORNUCOPIA.

TO EDITH.

NOW music fills the night with moving shades ;  
Its velvet darkness, veined like a grape,  
Obscures and falls round many a subtle shape  
—Figures that steal through cool tall colonnades,  
Vast minotaurian corridors of sleep ;  
Rhythmic they pass us, splashed by red cascades  
Of wine, fierce-flashing fountains whose proud waves  
Shimmer awhile ; plunge foaming over steep  
Age-polished rocks, into the dim cold caves  
Of starlit dusk below—then merge with night,  
Softly as children sinking into sleep.

But now more figures sway into our sight ;  
Strong and bare-shouldered, pressed and laden down.  
Stagger across the terraces. They bear  
Great cornucopia of summer fruit  
And heavy roses scented with the noon  
—Piled up with fruit and blossoms, all full blown,

## *Cornucopia.*

Crimson, or golden as the harvest moon—  
Piled up and overflowing in a flood  
Of riches ; brilliant-plumaged birds, that sing  
As the faint playing on a far sweet lute,  
Warble their tales of conquest and of love ;  
Perch on each shoulder ; sweep each rainbow wing  
Like lightning through the breathless dark above.  
Heaped up in vases gems shine hard and bright ;  
Sudden they flare out—gleaming red like blood—  
For now the darkness turns to swelling light,  
Great torches gild each shadow, tear the sky,  
As drums tear through the silence of the night ;  
Breaking its crystal quiet—making us cry  
Or catch our sobbing breath in sudden fear.  
A shadow stumbles, and the jewels shower  
On to the pavers with a sharp sweet sound.  
They mingle with the fountain drops that flower  
Up in a scarlet bloom above the ground,  
A beauteous changing blossom ; then they rain  
On to the broad mysterious terraces  
Where sea-gods rise to watch in cold disdain  
Before those vast vermilion palaces,  
—Watch where the slumbering coral gods of noon,  
Drunk with the sudden golden light and flare  
Of flaming torches, try to pluck and tear  
That wan enchanted lotus flower, the moon,  
Down from its calm still waters ; thus they fall,  
Like flowing plumes, the fountains of our festival.

## *Cornucopia.*

Slowly the torches die. They echo long,  
These last notes of a Bacchanalian song,  
Of drifting drowsy beauty, born of sleep,  
—Vast as the sea, as changing and as deep.  
In thanksgiving for shelt'ring summer skies  
Still, far away, a fervent red light glows.  
Small winds brush past against our lips and eyes,  
Caress them like a laughing summer rose,  
And rainbow moths flit by, in circling flight.  
A harp sobs out its crystal syrappings;  
Faintly it sounds, as the poor petal-wings,  
Fragile yet radiant, of a butterfly  
Beating against the barriers of night.

Then from the Ocean came the Syren song,  
Heavy with perfume, yet faint as a sigh,  
Kissing our minds, and changing right from wrong;  
Chaining our limbs; making our bodies seem  
Inert and spellbound, dead as in a dream.

## CHURCH PARADE.

THE flattened sea is harsh and blue—  
Lies stiff beneath—one tone, one hue,

While concertina waves unfold  
The painted shimmering sands of gold.

Each bird that whirls and wheels on high  
Must strangle, stifle in, its cry,

For nothing that's of Nature born  
Should seem so on the Sabbath morn.

The terrace glitters hard and white,  
Bedaubed and flecked with points of light .

That flicker at the passers-by—  
Reproachful as a curate's eye.

And china flowers, in steel-bound beds,  
Flare out in blues and flaming reds ;

Each blossom, rich and opulent,  
Stands like a soldier ; and its scent

Is turned to camphor in the air.  
No breath of wind would ever dare

To make the trees' plump branches sway,  
Whose thick green leaves hang down to pray.

## *Church Parade.*

The stiff, tall churches vomit out  
Their rustling masses of devout,  
Tall churches whose stained Gothic night  
Refuses to receive the light !

Watch how the stately walk along  
Toward the terrace, join the throng,

That paces carefully up and down  
Above a cut-out cardboard town !

With prayer-book rigid in each hand,  
They look below at sea and sand.

The round contentment in their eyes  
Betrays their favourite fond surmise,

That all successful at a trade  
Shall tread an eternal Church Parade,

And every soul that's sleek and fat  
Shall gain a heavenly top-hat.

From out the Church's Gothic night,  
Past beds of blossoms china bright,

Beneath the green trees' porous shade,  
We watch the sea-side Church Parade.

## SUNDAY AFTERNOON.

THE gilt-fring'd earth has sadly spun  
A sector of its lucent arc  
About the disillusioned Sun  
Of Autumn. The bright, angry spark  
Of Heaven in each upturned eye  
Denotes religious ecstasy.

We, too, have spun our Sunday round  
Of Church and beef and after-sleep  
In houses where obtrudes no sound  
But breathing, regular and deep.

Till Sabbath sentiment, well-fed,  
Demands a visit to the Dead.

For Autumn leaves sad thoughts beget,  
As from life's tree they clatter down,  
And Death has caught some in her net  
Even on Sunday—in this Town,

Tho' money and food and sleep are sweet !  
The dead leaves rattle down the street.

Fat bodies, silk-enmeshed, inflate  
Their way along ; if Death comes soon  
They'll leave this food-sweet earth to float  
Heavenward, like some huge balloon.

## *Sunday Afternoon.*

Religion dims each vacant eye  
As we approach the cemet'ry.

Proudly we walk ; with care we bend  
To lead our children by the hand,  
Here, where all, rich and poor, must end  
—This portal to a better land

To which, if in good business,  
All have hereditary access,

Where to afford the Saints relief  
From prayer and from religious questions,  
Round after round of deathless beef  
Flatters celestial digestions.

Where, in white robe, with golden crown,  
We watch our enemies sent down,

To other spheres, while we lean out  
Divinest pity in our eyes,  
And wonder why these sinners flout  
Our kindly pitying surprise,

Why look so angry when we play  
On gold harps as ~~they~~ go away,

A hymn tune, dear, familiar?  
But now we stand within the space,  
Where marble females drape a tear  
Above a whisker'd marble face.

## *Sunday Afternoon.*

"Isn't it pretty?" Even now  
Rich and exotic blossoms grow

About each granite monument  
Of worthy men, all fully drest,  
And, for some slight emolument,  
A weeping willow guards our rest.

Look! Over there a broken column  
Is watched by one geranium,

Whose scorching scarlet tones uphold  
Damnation and eternal fire  
To those who will not reckon gold—  
Who are not worthy of their hire,

For marble tombs are prized above  
Such brittle things as thoughts or love.

The crystal web of dusk now clings  
From evergreen to tropic tree,  
Toss'd by the wind that subtly brings  
A mingled scent of mould and tea,

That causes silence to be rent  
By one scream—childish, but intent.

For children will not realise  
That they should rest without a sound  
With folded hands and downcast eye  
Here, in the Saints' recruiting ground.

## *Sunday Afternoon.*

And so, in sorrow, we turn back  
To hasten on our high-tea track.

But after, in the night, we dream  
Of Heaven as a marbled bank,  
In which in our continual stream  
We give our gold for heavenly rank,

Where each Saint, standing like a sentry,  
Explains a mystic double-entry.

The Director of the Bank is God—  
Stares our foes coldly in the face,  
But gives us quite a friendly nod,  
And beckons us to share His place.

## DE LUXE.

### I

#### HYMN.

ABOVE from plaster-mountains,  
Wine-shadowed by the sea,  
Spurt white-wool clouds, as fountains  
Whirl from a rockery.

These clouds were surely given  
To keep the hills from harm,  
For when a cloud is riven  
The fatted rain falls warm.

Through porous leaves the sun drops  
Each dripping stalactite  
Of green. The chiselled tree-tops  
Seem cut from malachite.

Stiff leaves with ragged edges  
(Each one a wooden sword)  
Are carved to prickly hedges,  
On which, with one accord,

*De Luxe.*

Their clock-work songs of calf-love  
Stout birds stop to recite,  
From cages which the sun wove  
Of shade and latticed light.

Each brittle booth and joy-store  
Shines brightly. Below these  
The ocean at a toy shore  
Yaps like a Pekinese.

II

NURSERY RHYME

THE dusky king of Malabar  
Is chief of Eastern Potentates;  
Yet he wears no clothes except  
The jewels that decency dictates.

A thousand Malabaric wives  
Roam beneath green-tufted palms;  
Revel in the vileness  
That Bishop Heber psalms.

From honey-combs of light and shade  
They stop to watch black bodies dart  
Into the sea to search for pearls.  
By means of diabolic art

*De Luxe.*

Magicians keep the sharks away ;  
Mutter, utter, each dark spell,  
So that if a thief should steal,  
One more black would go to Hell.

But Mrs. Freudenthal, in furs,  
From brioche dreams to mild surprise  
Awakes ; the music throbs and purrs.  
The 'cellist, with albino eyes,

Rivets attention ; is, in fact,  
The very climax ; pink eyes flash  
Whenever nervous and pain-racked  
He hears the drums and cymbals clash.

Mrs. Freudenthal day-dreams  
—Ice-spoon half-way to her nose—  
Till the girl in ochre screams,  
Hits out at the girl in rose.

This is not at all the way  
To act in large and smart hotels ;  
Angrily the couples sway,  
Eagerly the riot swells.

Girls who cannot act with grace  
Should learn behaviour ; stay at home ;  
A convent is the proper place.  
Why not join the Church of Rome ?

*De Luxe.*

A waiter nearly drops the tray  
—Twenty tea-cups in one hand.  
Now the band joins in the fray,  
Fighting for the Promised Land.

Mrs. Freudenthal resents  
The scene ; and slowly rustles out,  
But the orchestra relents,  
Waking from its fever-bout.

AT THE HOUSE OF MRS. KINFOOT.

AT the house of Mrs. Kinfoot  
Are collected  
Men and women  
Of all ages.  
They are supposed  
To sing, paint, or to play the piano.  
In the drawing-room  
The fireplace is set  
With green tiles  
Of an acanthus pattern.  
The black curls of Mrs. Kinfoot  
Are symmetrical.  
—Descended, it is said,  
From the Kings of Ethiopia—  
But the British bourgeoisie has triumphed.  
Mr. Kinfoot is bald  
And talks  
In front of the fireplace  
With his head on one side,  
And his right hand  
In his pocket.

*At the House of Mrs. Kinfoot.*

The joy of catching tame elephants,  
And finding them to be white ones,  
Still gleams from the jungle-eyes  
Of Mrs. Kinfoot,  
But her mind is no jungle  
Of Ethiopia;  
But a sound British meadow.

Listen then to the gospel of Mrs. Kinfoot :  
“ The world was made for the British bourgeoisie,  
They are its Swiss Family Robinson ;  
The world is not what it was.  
We cannot understand all this unrest !

Adam and Eve were born to evening dress  
In the southern confines  
Of Belgravia.

Eve was very artistic, and all that,  
And felt the fall  
Quite dreadfully.

Cain was such a man of the world  
And belonged to every club in London ;  
His father simply adored him,  
—But had never really liked Abel,  
Who was rather a milk-sop.  
Nothing exists which the British bourgeoisie  
Does not understand ;  
Therefore there is no death  
—And, of course, no life.

*At the House of Mrs. Kinfoot.*

The British bourgeoisie  
Is not born,  
And does not die,  
But, if it is ill,  
It has a frightened look in its eyes.

The War was splendid, wasn't it?  
Oh yes, splendid, splendid."

Mrs. Kinfoot is a dear,  
And so artistic.

## MALGRÉ LUI.

THE voices weave a web of futile sound ;  
A fan is dropped by Lady Carabas ;  
Restored to her ; but Mrs. Kinfoot frowned,  
Guarding the door, as Cerberus his pass.

But suddenly great waves of sound obtrude  
Upon the pleasant party in this room ;  
While we enjoy the music's interlude,  
Outside there swells the trumpet call of doom.

Mosaic tombs or unmarked graves—asunder  
They all are rent. King Dodon from the dead  
Arises ; while the quivering heavens thunder,  
He smoothes his robe, and calmly shakes his head

Free of the ages' dust ; but now the voices  
Of those condemned (for judgment will not tarry)  
Shrill out in woe ; but one, alone, rejoices,  
For Mrs. Kinfoot scents another quarry.

The army of the dead are on the march  
To meet their Maker on His ivory throne.  
He sits beneath the rainbow's radiant arch,  
Dispensing judgment. Oh, atone, atone !

## *Malgré Lui.*

But Mrs. Kinfoot saw a sailor-sinner  
—With one arm—leave St. Paul's and walk away ;  
And Mrs. Kinfoot longed to give a dinner  
“ To meet the Judge upon the Judgment Day ! ”

Above God's Head a dozen suns kept guard  
Like sentinels. Her erring feet were led  
Up to a crowded hill, where God's regard  
Was fixed upon her, and He gravely said :

“ Anne Kinfoot, worthy mother and good wife,  
Your weakness and your faults are all forgiven.  
Go you, my child, to everlasting life,  
And take your husband also up to heaven.”

But she could see the Counsellors and Kings  
And brilliant bearers of a famous name,  
Tangled with snakes and horrid crawling things,  
Sent down to torture and eternal flame.

Then Mrs. Kinfoot lied in agony : “ Oh Lord,  
I am as others of my class and station.”  
She cried : “ Oh, have me bound and burnt and gored,  
Oh, send me down to suffer my damnation !

I swear I beat my children.” Oh ! despondent  
She was. “ I am a sinner ; I will tell  
How I escaped a ducal co-respondent  
Last year. My God, I must insist on Hell ! ”

## *Malgré Lui.*

But the great Judge was not deceived. He knew  
The worthy virtue of the Kinfoot line ;  
Yet as she went to heaven, constant, true,  
To principle, she murmured : “ Will you dine

To meet . . . ” But dragged away, she dwells on high  
And notes, but rather disapproves, the eccentricity  
Of Saints and early Christians who try  
To lessen the burden of her domesticity.

She has to play upon a golden harp,  
Join in the chorus of the heavenly choir ;  
Her answers to the Saints are sometimes sharp,  
She longs to singe her wings and share the fire.

Night never comes—so when she tries to flee  
To that perpetual party down below,  
The angels catch her, shouting out with glee  
“ Dear Mrs. Kinfoot. You are good !

. . . We know ! ”

## FROM "THE VALLEY OF THE GIANTS."

WE climbed beneath the tropic trees; like swords  
Their leaves unfold; their limbs bear swelling  
gourds

Like tumours, bearing blossoms that transcribe  
The wicked flicker of the insect tribe,  
Who, drunk with heavy honey as with gore,  
Crawl on the fleshy petals, till the roar  
Of some huge creature, that proud and alone  
Prowls in the forest, rouses them to drone;  
Within the venom'd mesh of this rank mane  
Flash sequined birds that tear the air in twain,  
And flecked with fierce green light, the hot ground seethes  
With buzzing furious sound as if it breathes  
In fever; still we climb the cone-shaped hill  
Till suddenly the living world is still.

The blood-red curtain of the sun is torn  
Aside, and through it there is faintly borne  
The slumbering night, until there fell around  
A silence that meant more than any sound.

*“The Valley of the Giants.”*

Then like a waterfall did darkness come  
With splashing of cool winds that seemed like foam,  
And in the dim pavilions above  
The crooning turtle who acclaims his love  
Is rocked as on a wave, and looks below  
In wonder; do the rippling waters flow  
There with sweet movement, will he see there soon,  
Clearly reflected, the refulgent moon?  
Now those more arrogant birds that peck'd the fruit  
Gilded by sunlight, are ashamed and mute—  
Just as their jewelled plumes that caught the stark  
Crude daylight colours, now fade into dark,  
While the dear humble dove bears on its wings  
The sheen that moonlight to deep water brings,  
And those proud flowers, like open wounds and spears  
Are hid by darkness; with its welling tears  
The dew has washed them, and we only see  
The pallid blossoms that again set free  
Nocturnal sweetness, until now closed up  
Within the ivory prison of each cup.  
For here each evening when dusk falls, the flowers  
Are rung by gentle winds as bells in towers  
Till in each chalice, white and open wide,  
The dew-reflected stars tremble and hide;  
For night, more cruel than the cruel day,  
Hides and dissembles, makes the moonbeam play  
In velvet soothing softness, on that strife  
Of trees and living things that men call life.

## MRS. FREUDENTHAL CONSULTS THE WITCH OF ENDOR . . .

A NOSE, however aquiline,  
Escapes detection in a throng;  
So she hopes; but sense of sin  
Made her shrink and steal along

Streets glazed by mocking summer heat  
To semblance of a cool canal,  
Where iridescent insects beat  
Their wings upon the liquid wall;

Where radiant insects, carrion-fed,  
Buzz and flutter busily,  
Smile, or frown, or nod the head,  
Expressing some familiar lie.

Enter the house, ascend the stair!  
Consult the scintillating ball.  
Beatrice Freudenthal, beware!  
Eve felt like you before the Fall.

Within the shining mystic globe  
Lies luck at bridge, or martyr's crown;  
A modern prophetess will probe  
The future, for one guinea down.

*Mrs. Freudenthal Consults the Witch of Endor.*

For that amount, the future's sword  
From crystal scabbard she will drag.  
She can unpack the future's hoard  
As we unpack a Gladstone bag.

Without the agency of man,  
Solely by fasting and by prayer,  
The wizards of old Jenghiz Khan  
Could move a wine-cup through the air,

Until it reached him; and he drank  
Fermented juice of rye or grape;  
The cup flew back; his courtiers shrank  
Away, astonished and agape.

Before the Llama turns to grapple  
With State Affairs, he learns to spin  
(Despite Sir Isaac Newton's Apple)  
In mid-air, sixty times—to win

Amusement mixed with approbation  
From sceptical ambassadors  
—For any kind of levitation  
Increases prestige with the Powers.

Such things were practised—did not tend  
To promote war or anarchy—  
Yet now such things would even end  
A Constitutional Monarchy.

*Mrs. Freudenthal Consults the Witch of Endor.*

Magic for a holy race  
Is surely wrong ; how strictly hidden  
The future in its crystal case  
Lies (oh, so near) ! and yet forbidden.

Though Gentile kings upon their thrones  
May weave a spell, or dance like Tich,  
Yet ponder on the bleaching bones  
Of Saul, who sought the Endor Witch.

## THEATRE OF VARIETIES.

CIRCLE on circle the hanging gardens descend,  
Slope from the upper darkness, each flower face  
Open, turned to the light and laughter and life  
Trembling heat, quicken and awake the air.  
Flutes and crying of strings assail the sense—  
Music, the revelation and marvellous lie;  
What is, what is not, truth and falsehood,  
Swim and mingle together.  
On the bright trestles tumblers, tamers of beasts,  
Dancers and clowns affirm their fury of life,  
And in a thousand minds beget a thousand  
Hallucinations, dreams of beauty, nightmares.

"The World-renowned Van Hogen Mogen in  
The Master Mystery of Modern Times. . . ."  
He talks, he talks; more powerfully than music  
His quick words hammer on the minds of men.  
"Observe this hat, Ladies and gentlemen;  
Empty, observe, empty as the universe  
Before the Head for which this Hat is made  
Was, or could think. Empty—observe, observe. . . ."

## *Theatre of Varieties.*

The rabbit kicks ; a bunch of paper flowers  
Blossoms in the limelight ; paper tape unrolls,  
Endless, a clue. " Ladies and gentlemen . . . ."  
Sharp, sharp on malleable minds his words  
Hammer. The little Indian boy  
Enters the basket. Bright, an Ethiop's sword  
Transfixes it and bleeding is withdrawn.  
Horror, like a magnet, draws the watching crowds  
Toward the scene of massacre. The walls  
Bend forward to the revealing light,  
And the pale faces are a thousand gargoyles  
Thrust out, spouting the ichor of their souls.  
" Ladies and gentlemen," the great Van Hogen Mogen  
Smiles and is kind. A puddle of dark blood  
Creeps slowly out. " The irremediable  
Has ceased to be."  
Empty of all but blood the basket gapes.  
" Arise !" he calls and blows his horn. " Arise !"  
Bird-like from the highest gallery  
The little Indian answers.  
Shout upon shout, the hanging gardens reverberate.  
Happy because the irremediable is healed,  
Happy because they have seen the impossible,  
Because they are freed from the dull daily law,  
They shout, they shout. And great Van Hogen Mogen  
Modestly bows, graciously smiles. The band  
Confirms the lie with loud triumphant blasts.  
The curtain falls. How quickly the walls recede

## *Theatre of Varieties.*

And the stretched gargoyles re-become  
Women and men ! who fill the warm thick air  
With rumour of their loves and discontents.  
Not suffering even great Hogen Mogen,  
Begetter of rabbits out of empty hats,  
Scorner of nature, raiser from the dead,  
To invade the sanctities of private life.

The lamps once more expire and the red curtain  
Glow like a hearth behind the kindled ramp.  
The hearth dissolves.  
God's eyes of limelight grope about the darkness,  
Cross squinting, squinting apart with splayed regard,  
Focus at last unanimously  
A pearly vision with an open mouth,  
Source of a sugared fountain.  
See, as she sings, the eyes of God change colour,  
Voluptuously incarnadined with red,  
Then green for horror, purple with condolence.  
Then, at a blink, go out, disquietingly.  
She sings—Oh, revelation and marvellous lie—  
Till Picardy blooms nothing but perfumed roses,  
With never a rotting corpse in all its earth.

The Six Aerial Sisters Polpetini  
Dive from trapeze to far trapeze  
With all the clockwork certainty of stars.  
About his head Sclopis, the juggler, keeps

## *Theatre of Varieties.*

In unremitting planetary dance  
A little host of silver spheres,  
And ever quicker throwing, throwing, throwing,  
Builds up a solid arch of movement.  
If he should drop an atom? or if they  
Lose hold too soon and fall?  
But they can never fail; for if they did  
What breath of panic would shake the pale flower faces  
That in the hanging gardens tranquilly bloom.  
Professor Chubb's Automaton performs  
Upon the viols and virginals, plays chess,  
Ombre and loo, mistigri, tric-trac, pushpin,  
Sings Lilliburlero in falsetto, answers  
All questions put to it, and with its rubber feet  
Noiselessly dances the antique heydiguy.  
"Is it a man?" the terrible infant asks.  
And "No." they say whose business it is  
To say such infants no. And "No" again  
They shout when after watching Dobbs and Debs  
Step simultaneously through intricate dances,  
Hammer the same tune with their rattling clogs  
In faultless unison, the infant wondering asks,  
"And they, are they machines?"

Music, the revelation and marvellous lie,  
Rebuilds in the minds of all a suave and curving  
Kingdom of Heaven; under God's bright eyes  
An angel walks and with one rolling glance

## *Theatre of Varleties.*

Blesses, sun-like, each flower in the hanging gardens.  
Oh, heavenly smile and god-illuminated glances,  
Hair of gold and marble brow,  
And silken comeliness of limb !  
“ Divine ! ” they say, having no words by which  
To call a spade a spade, Divine Xenocrate !  
Beauty being mysterious is therefore God,  
And love a pleasure indescribable,  
Is God again, and awe, the dark abyss  
Where words fall wingless and lampless, is also God !  
Xenocrate, divine Xenocrate !  
“ Father,” the terrible infant’s voice is shrill,  
“ Why does the lady wear no skirts ? ”  
She wears no skirts, God’s eyes have never been brighter,  
The face flowers open in her emanation,  
Xenocrate, sun-like Xenocrate !—  
She is the suave and curving Kingdom of Heaven  
Made manifest to the eyes. Xenocrate !  
Her belly is like a mound of wheat, her breasts  
Are towers, her hair like a flock of goats.  
“ Her foot is feat with diamond toes  
And she on legs of ruby goes. . . . ”  
Xenocrate, divine Xenocrate !  
The face flowers rustle in the flagellant wind  
Of her loud singing. A poet in the pit  
Jots down, in tears, the words of her Siren song.  
“ So every spirit as it is most pure,  
And hath in it the more of heavenly light,

## *Theatre of Varieties.*

So it the rarer body doth procure  
To habit in, and is more fairly dight  
With cheerful grace and amiable sight :  
For of the soul the body form doth take ;  
And soul is form and doth the body make."

—" Now boys, together ! All with me ! "

" For of the soul the body form doth take ;— . . .  
Together, boys, together !  
And soul is form and doth the body make."  
Xenocrate, alone, alone divine !

" God save the King." Music's last practical joke  
Still sounding in their ears, bugling of glory,  
The folk stream out into the soft damp darkness  
Of Saturday night in Camden Town.  
Already next week's bills are being posted :—  
Urim and Thummim, cross-talk comedians,  
Ringpok, the Magian of Thibet,  
The Two Bedelias, Ruby and Truby Dicks,  
Sam Foy and Troupe of Serio-Comic Cyclists . . .  
Infinite in resource, each week from now till doomsday,  
The Theatre of Varieties offers something new.  
Twice nightly every evening from now till doomsday  
Its hanging gardens, bedded with pale flower faces,  
Will echo with ever new delight,  
While on the shining trestles tumblers, tamers of beasts,  
Dancers and clowns will affirm in strange new ways  
Their everlasting fury of life.

## HARD OF HEARING.

ONCE in April ways  
I heard the cuckoo call.  
Among more withering days  
Haulms twitched and clicked with heat.  
I heard the bumping fall  
Of yellow plums. My feet  
Drew bickerings from the grass  
Like thunder-rain on roofs,  
Or clattered arms of brass.  
Horses' battering hoofs  
Ring no louder now  
Than once a distant stream.  
The grasshopper's old-hussif row  
Dies to remembered dream.

In bygone days I heard  
The swinging dewberry scratch  
To the flurried flight of a bird,  
Nor found it hard to catch  
The plashy drop when a trout  
Came bowbent leaping out.

## *Hard of Hearing.*

I heard from pools and bogs  
The little, barking frogs.  
Clapping water-weeds,  
The hiss of sand-wasps' wings,  
Wind-brattled campion seeds,  
Were close familiar things.  
Now nature's musics half are fled ;  
And half my heart is dead.

## LOVERS.

FLAT streams of light flow ribboning the road.  
More black along the black new-rained-in air  
Love-coupled shades feel comfortable flesh.

The tree-tops lift their Atlantean load,  
And, though they mutter, let no pinpoint-flare  
Fall with a plum-plop through the leafy mesh.

Across the gloom two faces leap, and I  
Am dizzied. Their how more than moony power,  
Brighter than lamp-lit gleaming awes me mute.

Are lovers fledged by flesh for this lark-high,  
Pure, candid flight? Do bodily beauties flower  
To ripe a strange and spiritual fruit?

## BLIND.

**A**N old man, tap, tap, tapping went  
A thin, beech-broken way.  
So many straight, unheedful trees  
Before his footing lay,  
That turn or stumble where he would  
He blundered full against a tree.  
He did not seem to care; but, oh,  
Bitter, bitter, it was to me.

## CHILD'S SONG.

MY mother was a harlot,  
My father was a clerk;  
My mother wore scarlet,  
My father a coat dark.

They met once only,  
Parted at morn—  
But from that lone lie  
Was I born.

When she grew bigger,  
Mother in dread  
Pinched in her figure,  
Bore me dead.

They buried my body  
Deep in a hole,  
And prayed to God He  
Would save my soul.

## TIME.

*(From the French.)*

TIME'S horny nail the flesh of beauty flays;  
And round dumb lips grown weary of sweet  
lays

Graves deep the line to tell where laughter died.  
Blood curdles in the porphyry's veined pride;  
Day turns to ashes, heaven to marble cold;  
A trunk, all gnarled, the Dryad's limbs enfold;  
The silvery voice in mocking echo calls:  
Thy flask an urn, a sepulchre thy halls,  
Thy weeping soul with sad winds swept along,  
Of flesh and blood, of laughter and of song,  
Of airy thought, what symbol shapes the close?  
A dove upon the wing, a ruined rose.

## MIST AND CLOUD.

ALL Hellas in that rift !  
The vapours part, and straightway I look through  
Into a land that laughs beneath the blue,  
Cloud-frontiered, rainbow-barred,  
Thessalian fastnesses of deer and pard,  
Pindus and Tempe, rhododendron-starred.  
Soon, they begin to lift :  
Slow partings first, loath arms linked tenderly round rock  
and clift,  
Cold bosoms amorous leaned on armoured crags :  
Such long farewells,  
Such trailing of white robes o'er black peat-hags,  
Silvered with springs and sprent with blue hare-bells ;  
Such lingering in dells,  
Such shy returns,  
Indraughts of valleys wet with drooping ferns ;  
And then, auroral, radiantly swift,  
They mount in pride  
And as a gift,  
Leave to the golden day the green hill-side.  
Some shreds are caught among the topmost trees ;  
Like visible spirits of the silences,

## *Mist and Cloud.*

Succeeding slow with pauseful step, they glide  
Across the glittering desert of the air;  
Handmaidens fair,  
They go to dip their robes in founts of dawn;  
Or in pure alabaster pitchers bear  
The dewy wine, from forest-wells deep-drawn.

So morning drew my fancy, like the mist,  
To follow after;  
But in the sullen mountain-top, unkissed,  
All Sinai thundered terrible reproof,  
And from such whoredoms held himself aloof,  
No friend of love or laughter.  
Above the gorge  
The trees were Titans, the black rocks a forge,  
And audibly almost the vapour hissed;  
As, unto skiey roof and rafter,  
When Jove's lame armourer wrought 'gainst old revolts,  
Rolled the dull reek of tempering thunderbolts.

## EDEN.

LIGHT as the ascended breath of snow  
That climbs into the azure air,  
When Himalayan peaks are bare,  
And all their gloom-built gullies know  
The warmth of spring,—and virginal  
As the white paps of Eve unwed  
In Eden-bower the blossoms were.  
Their pearly lustre, half opaque,  
Pied with pink stain and purple strake,  
Drank up the liquid light that fed  
Their green and leafy coronal.  
And in their matrix, the faint stir  
Of Life (that fallen Lucifer  
In likeness of a creeping snake  
Longed for)—no motion made to strew  
The ground beneath them; and the dew  
Despoiled them not; nor butterfly  
Their motionless tranquillity  
Bowed; nor light-fingered airs that pass  
Let fall one petal on the grass.  
So calm it was in Eden bower,  
So heavenly calm by bush and brake,

## *Eden.*

Of beauty that completes the flower  
They had not lost a single flake.  
But oh, how fugitive and brief  
The perfect hour of bud and leaf.  
Was it a breeze or a wild bird,  
Or the maturer life within,  
That first their infant slumber stirred;  
Or Eve when bending down her chin  
She touched a petal with her breath?  
Five petals eddied to the earth;  
And straightening out his monstrous girth  
Where coiled among the leaves he hid,  
Earthwards the watchful Serpent slid,  
And made partaker of his mirth  
The destined shadow men call Sin,  
Who told it to his brother Death.

PORPHYRO.

MUSIC, like the wandering shower,  
Whose variable voice is heard  
On lawny grass, in leafy bower,  
The slumbrous pool of silence stirred.  
The trumpet neighs with high fanfare,  
The viol deep and violin ;  
The looped awnings lifted are,  
And lo, a world of light within ;  
A world of light, a world of flame,  
That lives and dies to music's beat ;  
And there upon the waft of fame  
Flew Porphyro with wingèd feet.  
Hot on the scent the eager pack  
May wind the wild deer up the glen,  
But who shall tread the dancer's track  
That dances on the hearts of men ?  
The feignèd dreams of false desire  
Their fetters round his footsteps wove,  
And from beneath, like flakes of fire  
On crocus-lawns in Spring-time, clove.

## *Porphyro.*

And silent men of secret mien,  
Fanned the white skin of Egypt's queen,  
Laid on her couch of emerald lawn.  
And shyly came the silk-eared Faun,  
The fawning Satyr whisked his tail,  
With frolic grin and wrinkled mask,  
Old Sylvan hopped well-drunk with ale,  
And Bacchus squelched his goat-skin cask,  
And flower-like nymphs from cloudless calm  
Of Cyprian Olympus high,  
Came down the slopes of pine and palm  
To see him dance and see him die.  
And he is but a brown-limbed slave,  
And she the hornèd Queen of Night ;  
She draws him, as the moon the wave,—  
He spins, her frantic satellite.  
Her lustful heart is full of pride ;  
Her eyes upon his body feast ;  
She motions to her dangerous side  
Death's Cup-bearer, the mitred priest,  
The gilded poison is for thee  
That in the golden goblet swims !  
Thy frame an arch of agony,  
Cold trembling in thy comely limbs.  
Die Porphyro !—To this long pause  
Have come thy many-wandered feet.—  
The people thundered their applause,  
The Emperor started to his feet,

*Porphyro.*

Flung roses and a purse of gold.—  
But Death, your only realist,  
Stole down the wings with whisper cold,  
And in my heart a serpent hissed :—  
“ Better yet, and better yet !  
He will do it better yet !  
Heap roses, weathe him all the bays  
That toilers after fame can get !  
In the dark ending of his days,  
When none is nigh to blame or praise,  
He will do it better yet ! ”

## THE CROCODILE DISCOURSES.

I DO not find it written in my slime  
That God is Love ; yet He is very good ;  
For first, He filed my teeth exceeding sharp,  
And shut them in a trap of triple steel,  
Gave me my saurian ancestry, whereby  
I walk abroad unquestioned armiger,  
And wear unruined my tough coat of mail.  
Also, to deck a brother deity  
(For I am more than priest if less than God),  
He offers lotus buds, and lends me stars  
To float upon my pool ; and when I swim  
On moonless nights they tremble in the wash  
And furrow of my wave. Familiar,  
As to a schoolboy ciphers on a slate,  
I meditate my deep astrology,  
Reading the cycles and conjunctive hours  
That ripen for my maw the virgin's breasts,  
The young wife's womb. They have no time to scream,  
I trip so smoothly down the darkling stair  
And paddle in the deeps. My pool is called  
Silence, the deadener of unseemly noise,  
That rends so woundily the clamorous air.  
I do not roar like loud and vulgar beasts,

## *The Crocodile Discourses.*

But on a soft bed lay them tenderly,  
Striving to calm them, lest they tear the flesh.  
There the poor gape, that is their voiceless scream,  
No echo has but bubbles. Soft, so soft  
The seasoned flesh ; the after-dinner sleep,  
In reed-brake or thorn-thicket, sanctified  
With comfortable closing of the lids  
And beatific smile, of blessedness  
And the peculiar care of Providence  
Humbly acknowledged, sign, misunderstood,  
But not the less sincere. Ah, yes, the fool  
Hath said " There is no God," but I am wise ;  
Therefore to Him, who for His servant's food  
Fattens the suckling, strews with fin and spawn  
My pool, and fills with splash of silver rain,  
I give among warm rocks and waterweeds  
Amphibious thanks."

Thus far the crocodile,  
Reading his thesis theologiæ ;  
And all admitted it extremely sound.

## THE AMBUSH.

“ **W**ILD one, wild one, fleeing through the woods,  
Your skin is rent with thorns, dark fear is in  
your eyes.”

“ A deer was caught by giant snakes with soft and gleaming  
hoods :

They are winding round her heart until she dies.”

“ Wild one, wild one, quiet now your heart.”

“ The doe was white and beautiful, her eyes were fires  
of pain.”

“ ’Tis bitter, for the chase I willed is ended ere the start :  
By strong pursuing hounds I wished her slain.”

“ Wild one, wild one, break not from me so !

The woods are fierce with hunger, and day has fled  
the skies,

But in the house is tenderness and dreams.” “ O, God, I go  
From the terror of his hands and hooded eyes !”

## STARS.

**I**N the sharp splendour of a star  
We know what timeless souls we are,  
And apprehend the uncharted seas  
Where throng our gilded argosies.

Freighted with heavy bales of sense  
We sail, not knowing why, nor whence,  
Nor whither . . . ever thrusting on  
Against huge seas, aloof, alone.

## THE FLAME.

TO JOHN FLANAGAN.

YOU shall take paint and I take words,  
And both shall colour life with dream.  
Your thoughts shall glow, and mine, like birds,  
Shall sing more proudly than they seem.

Yet we shall never be appeased :  
This drouth and hunger of the soul  
Is too essential to be eased  
With beauty lesser than the whole.

Our five sweet senses shall not slake  
The fire that was before we came.  
Ah, struggle on for Beauty's sake  
And give your flaming heart to flame.

## SRÀMOZAN.

*(For a Ballet.)*

SRÀMOZAN sits dying : his slaves stand in silence,  
Nubians, Syrians, leashed to his nod.

Death is on his dark brow, with fierce, keen jewels.

*Who has heard the treading of the cat-faced god ?*

*Has any one heard ?* Incense to the sun-chinks

Wreathes. Balconied girls move fans in the gloom—

Ostrich, flamingo and peacock feathers

In that great ivory ebony room.

*Has any one heard ?* A silver-sprung fountain

Flowers in shadow, spirtles and sings

From emerald heads of crested lizards.

*Has any one felt his shuddering wings ?*

Wearily Sràmozan watches a blue monkey

From gold chain swinging, chattering her teeth,

Clenching her paw with loathing of the goldfish

Swift and lustrous in the pool beneath.

*Sràmozan.*

Heavily he sighs, and looks to the still curtain  
Where Sràb stands, huge, with curved, monstrous blade.  
“Bring me Saïcha while my eyes have vision  
That I may pass the Shadows unafraid.”

“The wings stirred then?” “I heard his velvet treading!”  
Sràmozan starts up with deep hungering eyes.  
Saïcha, tinkling, is running past the eunuchs,  
Spins on the throne-steps where he dies.

Saïcha, undulant with glittering allurements,  
Mimes and quivers to plucked, murmurous strings.  
The orange pavement twirls to her rhythm.  
Death by the curtain furls his wings.

Sràmozan from his throne of jade and silver  
Casts great sapphires and chrysolites down,  
Whispering hoarsely praises of the sorceress,  
Saïcha, whirling slender and brown.

“See how burningly he gazes upon her!”  
The dance wanes. She sways as a tall lily sways.  
“The wings rushed then!” His tired face is ashen.  
Death threads softly the whispering maze.

The dance ends. How like a dying bird she flutters!  
Goldenly she falls, and shivers, and is still.  
“For the soul of Sràmozan pray, O ye People!  
The years are sorrows the gods fulfil.”

*Sràmozan.*

Sràb moves swiftly. The chattering blue monkey  
Squeals, and a girl screams. "Saïcha, arise!  
Thy little feet shall go afar with Sràmozan."  
The sword smites hissing in a storm of sighs.

## "LAUGHING LIONS WILL COME."

THE prophet from his desert cave  
Listens to the sound of water  
Lapping with tongues the fringes of the sand.  
Young flowers open for the bees ;  
A roadway for the yellow sun  
Climbs from the hills into the fallow sea.  
The scented bells hold golden sound ;  
And the strong lion drinks the salted waves,  
Cooling his mane within the sudden foam.  
The bee skirts tremblingly the shining dew  
Looking for honey in the golden dells,  
While the lion shakes the loud hills again.  
This early morning there may lie some gold  
Forgotten when the light was fled ;  
To-day the great beams may shine  
On opened caves where run swift rivers,  
Shooting their arrows at the swordless sea,  
And blind to the sun whose shining armour  
Shows in the sky among the clouds he charges—  
Driving them across a wind-walled field  
Into the shelter of the towering hills.  
Honey may be hiding in the waking flowers ;  
The man in armour hides behind the gold,  
The strongest waves, far off, are snow.

*"Laughing Lions Will Come."*

These are dangers to the daring robber,  
The armoured impotence of man-made deity,  
And crowd-thick, barking heads, on the lion-like sand.  
    Gathering honey in the rolling desert,  
    Such are the perils to a fasting prophet—  
    Dog-like men, and men-like gods.

Many doors lie open into his cave,  
For lion-springs, flash of the surging sea,  
And dogs that bark to bar him from his palm.  
    To leave his cave, and walk on the burning sand,  
    He passes the sun that bridles his yellow mane,  
    And the roaring crowd, an ocean of clashing waves.

Tight-rope dancers run over the roofs  
And fall in the market-place—  
Raising a laugh.

    It looks like walking on the rainbow's bridge  
    Among the clouds, behind the windows.  
    There below fly the flags of smoke  
Waving possession that the lord's at home  
And works, a creator, in his own fair garden  
Where trees spring as fountains, lift into the air  
    Their branches steadied in the height with wings  
    That quiver in the stream of wind,  
    And by the cold are frozen as they drop,  
Before they foam again as fiery darts  
Piercing the soft breasts of the pool;  
They tremble above the water, bird-like, with flashing  
feathers.

*"Laughing Lions Will Come."*

Is Zarathustra armoured that he goes  
Leaving his cave, down mountains,  
Fording swift rivers, to attain the town?  
The tight-rope dancers had turned back again  
Waving their wands to balance a sharp curve.  
They stagger as a child who learns his walk  
Using a crutch in place of human hand,  
Holding his own high above the head  
To guide him on an easy level path;  
Guitars are played by men upon high stilts  
Stepping over gardens to keep up the tune  
Because the dancers only move with music.  
With creaking leg and hollow tread  
They walk among the houses, chase the rope,  
And whisper warning while they play more loud.  
Below, the cripples lean out from their corners  
And a dwarf or two will strain his little stride  
To run like a child holding a strong kite.  
This is the magnet drawing every eye  
When Zarathustra comes behind the curtain of the  
gold horizon,  
Walks into the town through the deserted gates.  
Judges are holding back the wheel of time  
Fitting the spokes to figures on a watch  
As they follow the competitors on airy paths.  
He walks beneath an archway, hears his tread  
Multiplied and echoed in this empty hall,  
And then is alone again on the empty street.

*"Laughing Lions Will Come."*

Stepping out firm, he starts to sing,  
Turns the corner and is in the square,—  
His song a loud river that now joins the sea.

Who will he first step up to,  
Take by the shoulder,  
To break down his stare?

Will he stoop down to a dwarf and shout,  
Ask him to run across the square  
And beg the Mayor to stop festivities a moment?

Is it too dangerous to hold a stilt,  
Shouting out loud into the noisy air  
To attract attention from a wooden giant?

If he holds a stilt and stops the music  
Down will tumble all the tight-rope dancers  
And the men who play the mandolines cannot stand still.

Shout as loud as he possibly can,  
He will never drown the music  
And the roaring crowds.

One course, one only, is there to his hand;  
Wonder and marvel are the joys to-day,  
And this is the course that he must tread.

God goes on a cloud,  
But the dancers walk there,  
And the crowd shout louder than the singing of his  
angels.

Thinking a moment, Zarathustra stopped,  
Stroked his beard, and hesitated  
Till his mind lit up;

*"Laughing Lions Will Come."*

Without a cry, without a word  
He started running down the square,  
Raced ever quicker till he reached a wall;  
No sooner touched it  
Than he turned again  
Running ever faster than the way he came.  
Reached the starting-point,  
Turned once more  
Raising a dust to hide his face.  
The men on stilts looked down like birds  
Who watch for prey in the glistening grass,  
And dropped the instruments from their hands;  
The dancers when the music stopped  
Swayed on their ropes  
And fell like stars,  
Flashed through the air with trailing sparks  
And opened on the ground  
Their clumsy petals.  
The dwarfs and cripples raised themselves,  
Came from their corners into dazzling sun  
And ran among the crowd to start them running.  
Soon Zarathustra showed in front;  
Just behind were the men on stilts,  
After them the able-bodied ran  
Followed by cripples and the bounding dwarfs;  
Half of them were running from right to left  
While Zarathustra showed from left to right.  
Soon he caught the laggards and the limping halt

*"Laughing Lions Will Come."*

And ran among their crutches  
By the jumping dwarfs.

    This time turning down a narrow street

    He ran into a house

    And climbed the shaking stairs.

Out from the window on a roof he stepped

While the people ran up stairways

Like a flood inside a well ;

    Down a drain-pipe on the ground again.

    He heard the tumbling ceilings

    And the roofs fall in.

While the survivors took the road again

Zarathustra ran out from a gate once more

Till he reached the burning sand,

    And fell back breathless

    Blind from the dust

    And dead with running.

Clouds of dust still rose from the town—

Blurred murmurs

And the tread of hundreds running.

    " I won attention by my ruse.

    Shouting was vain, and had I showed

    Floating above them on a cloud

    They would have guessed me lowered from a tower

    Treading the yielding clouds like a man through snow.

    So I had to run among them like a wind.

    But for all my running they have never seen

*“ Laughing Lions Will Come.”*

The stride of my footsteps,  
But thought themselves  
Each in each other to contain the cause.  
My years of meditation in a cave  
Gave more hope for another visit ;  
But now that they run themselves around the town  
Nothing will stop them but themselves alone.  
If some one with young lungs  
Blew out through a trumpet the last chance for man,  
It would be a feature in their entertainment.  
I must look at the sun  
Who sinks to die  
And pours his treasures to the sea to keep,  
Guarding them with tempests and a change of tide,  
So that in sinking to the sunless caves  
Where they lie to light the darkness till he comes again,  
The poorest fisherman has golden oars  
To row with over the echoing waves  
Suddenly shaking their yellow manes  
To sound new music to the gods below.  
And when the gold is taken from the oars  
The music ceases and the waves are mute  
Till a new wind whispers from the thirsty trees  
And the fisherman can hoist his sail.”

## ET IN ARCADIA, OMNES.

(From *The Bird-Actors.*)

THE stars, but prophets call them sons of God,  
Lay in the fresh field, and the cool wind trod,  
Striding, across the bodies where they slept  
And woke them to the glory that they kept  
All day in bondage until darkness came,  
When movement flowed as water, gold as flame.

The gods now rise and let the new light run  
Rippling its quick strong life and substance spun  
From fluttering wings and fiery breasts of clouds  
Along their limbs just risen from the shrouds  
Of death-like slumber till they play again;  
Blue hills, far island watch them, and the plain.

Above white clouds the stars come from their tent  
On which to-day's dead light spills lustre, spent,  
And feeble after fiery beams and bars  
Have burned the sea with madness, earth with wars,  
And made still waters mirror in their glass  
The gold hung woods, and gliding clouds that pass,  
Dip their tall towers like pennons in the lake  
And, hidden from the sun, their thirst they slake

*Et in Arcadia, Omnes.*

Till, at the time the nightingales begin  
The clouds have vanished, and the night is thin.

Now at their settled stations in the sky  
The stars are still, or spread their wings to fly,  
Are motionless, or moving with their gold  
Through Heavens wide as water, and as cold.  
Looking between sharp edges of the leaves  
Beneath black-shadowed houses, and their eaves  
Still shining in the evening rain, there show  
Unfolding flowers that tremble as they grow,  
And several ships with glittering sails of glass  
Swim the blue seas, or float beneath the mass  
Of towering cliffs down which the gold men leap,  
Cross the wide sands, run down the shelving steep,  
Ride on the foam, and climb the golden ropes  
Until the soft-breathed wind fulfil their hopes.

Now that the sky is once more set with signs  
From balconies above a tree that shines  
With fan-like agitation of the wind,  
Revolving its lush petals till they bind  
Their spinning dance into a formless round,  
The people lean and listen to the sound  
Of voices parting the dim green, and strings  
That wave-like beat their foam upon the wings  
Flashing below the crystal fall of song,  
Which, melting, drops in music on the throng.

*Et in Arcadia, Omnes.*

From bird-throats kissing the warm air there drops  
The mingling of cool snow and flame through stops  
Of flute-like tongues that gather fire from light  
To make their honey golden to our sight.

The poorest even have their hour of pleasure  
When the daylight fails  
And the more advanced young women  
Play the piano,  
While the more advanced young men  
Accompany them with song,  
And those who cannot play their part,  
Sit in the window.

At a late hour all the voices stop,  
The day's perpetual sound is dead,  
So still now  
That you think the singers  
Must still be in that room,  
The women sleeping with the half-closed eyes  
Of wax-work figures,  
And the men as plaster caryatides  
Upholding the low roofs of lodging-houses  
On their sad crushed heads.  
The next few hours are far the best  
In which to temper truth with a trite compromise.  
In more imaginative lands  
Our instruments are still the strings

*Et in Arcadia, Omnes.*

That carry every trembling confidence  
Through a half-open window—  
Till, stepping to the water's edge  
You see your own tall shadow  
In the clear windows of the water  
With white pointed mask  
Abetting your new self disguised ;—  
And all the music of the air obeys  
The silver presence singing in the trees  
And giving time its intervals of lucid silence  
While the wind touches the taut strings of the sea,  
And the waterfalls of light  
Drip through the leaves  
Upon the dew-drenched grass.  
If such and such sit in the gamut of one's life  
Within the same close box of yellow bricks,  
Under a mutual roof ;  
Bow from the windows if you walk beneath  
And leash themselves to let you climb the stairs,  
Is not a little latitude allowed  
For subtle insolence, and half-veiled threats ?

Calling through the lattices of leaves  
At those wreathed windows  
Where, flower-like, the gold light hangs,  
Wise birds repeat,  
As echoes from cool caves  
The words they're taught.

## *Et in Arcadia, Omnes*

A wall of cactus guards the virgin sound  
Of piano scales  
Ringing the changes  
In a small school-room,  
And on the black keys  
Hammering with the hard beak of woodpeckers  
On a moss-grown tree.  
From all around young ardent voices  
Reiterate the aged sentiments,  
While a brave few try the spiral stairs  
Spinning like blown smoke to the glittering stars,  
Half-lost in the damp breath of clouds  
That tarnish the gilt edges of their song.

Through the splintered stillness  
Sounds like small animals  
Creep from their holes  
And from a hundred various heights,  
From terraces of all the shaking fields of leaves,  
The frail ladders  
On which our meaning climbs  
Span the blue air  
Until they touch the sodden ground.

Music, that on the stooping sails of wind,  
Drifting, divides the distance, and can bind  
Those it has chosen with a supple string,  
Keeping them motionless to feel her wing,

*Et in Arcadia, Omnes.*

Can negative the constant turn of time  
And make long minutes shorter than the chime  
Of waters bruising the white foam of waves  
Before whose rush the sea-gods seek their caves ;  
Thus, at the music beating through a wall  
Tired limbs revive, and shadows seem the tall  
And flashing figures walking by a lake ;  
Known faces, unknown bodies slowly shake  
Their dancing skeletons to normal flesh,  
And walking in warm light within a mesh  
Of memories that follow on the scent ;  
The once-again-remembered wishes bent  
On embraces, or the easier art of flight ;  
Centre round persons crushed beneath the might  
Of phrases blown like trumpets, but to fall  
Deafened by loud sound, stifled by the pall  
Of soaring wings too heavy for their weight ;  
The music, dying, ceases, and the mate  
Of every big ambition faints away,  
Gone are the dreams, the darkness lives, till day  
With staring light rehearses all the ills  
Poured down on us each morning from the hills.

But now, before ambition starts its reign  
And crowns itself within the sleeping brain,  
A fitting altar for a mocking rite,  
The hours arrive which offer to our sight  
In place of sun motes in a dancing air  
The lively brilliance of crowds laid bare,

*Et in Arcadia, Omnes.*

And in the place of serenading winds,  
A surfeiting of subtle sound, that binds  
The plumage of the trees and makes them still,  
While murmurs run as water from a hill  
Down to the valleys where they form a flood,  
And rising, fill the veins of trees with blood,  
Break the quiet spell, and run their fire along  
Thrilling the leaves until they shout the song  
Of rolling river and of gliding cloud,  
More moving than the sea, and still more proud ;  
Of boughs fanning the liquid air until  
The wind comes back and breathes into each quill  
And then, quite suddenly, the birds begin  
Throwing their brilliant spirals through the thin  
Clear pavers to the vaster vaults of air ;  
White caravans of clouds are listening there ;  
The murmurs are soft whispering of men  
Drinking the evening fall of coolness, when  
The dappled light gives intervals of shade  
Arching the light-ribbed dark with shadows made  
Of moving shapes, and lattices of green  
That trace their sudden sharpness, where, between  
Tall houses and the deep-diapered woods  
Dim voices meet, and mix their various moods.  
  
The flickering darkness covers as a cloak  
Those hidden there, when certain changes broke  
The set calm, and lit the still air with fire  
Before whose flames the old and ill retire ;

*Et in Arcadia, Omnes.*

The beating blood gives wings that flash and lift  
To bodies whose young signs of life they sift  
From evidence and symbol of decay  
To feel the freshened splendour of new day.

Rise from the ashes where you lay so long,  
Stand up triumphant, resolute, and strong.  
The cowering darkness is as oil to fire  
Intended but to multiply your ire,  
Your wings must carry you to cleave the cloud  
And take the treasure from its castle proud,  
Building white bastions above the waves  
To hold the icy heart within its caves ;  
For bribe, the gold upon the glittering trees  
Lies there for you, as honey for the bees,  
The streams and running currents of the air  
Is path and roadway for your footstep there,  
And walking then above the wide-stretched land  
The flower scents reach their blossoms to your hand ;  
And now to send a shiver through the leaves  
And thrill with melody the gathered sheaves,  
Touching the fields beyond the reach of sound  
To light the gathered gold upon the ground.  
The clouds dissolve and show a sea of glass,  
Still islands, and the floating ships that pass.

On earth once more, the music guides your feet,  
Annihilating distance till you meet.

*Et in Arcadia, Omnes.*

The moment comes to don your first disguise  
And posture it before the sightless eyes  
Vast imbecile mentality of those  
Who cannot tell a thistle from a rose ;  
This is for others ; but for one, alone,  
The altered aspect and the change of tone ;  
For one alone ; yet others in these hours  
Show greater changes and more subtle powers.  
They glide in carriages past flashing green  
Fans, and dropping curtains, liquid with sheen  
Of waters, echoing every shaft of light  
That fills an avenue too long for sight  
Until the gold spoke fits the wheel on high  
Moving in majesty along the sky ;  
From lakes that flash like mirrors or like swords  
The echoes send back shuddering sounds and words  
And multiply the moving shafts and wells,  
Fashion new glory and invent fresh spells  
To crack the glass of silence with the tongues  
That throw like fountains and have fire for lungs.  
They come by water with a white sail, blown  
Like a taut cloud, like a gaudy shell shown  
Through clear water on the pale plains of sand  
As a city with carved towers on gold strand ;  
Or float more gently, crossing a still world  
Using their oars as wings, with wide sails furled,  
Make the soft sound of feathers as they dip  
To wave the water back and press the lip,

*Et in Arcadia, Omnes.*

Floating still further on the troubled glass  
That shows its secrets, and the mountains' mass.  
A wanton warmth breathes on them below  
The shaking smoothness, and white bodies show  
That ride the slight waves holding to the manes;  
Men on galloping horses down the plains.  
Clearer water shows the fine limbs that tempt  
The dwellers in wild places, rough, unkempt;  
If such there were who lived among these woods  
Crowding upon the bank, they'd fire their moods  
And carry a white body to the caves  
To catch the cataracting force of waves,  
And gratify the unaccustomed touch;  
Soothe with cool snow of limbs the heat, of such  
Blind, flower-like, followers who track the sun  
And know the causeways where his feet have run  
Treading through clear clouds the tree-tops, below  
He dyes the leaves with brilliance to show  
The glittering windows and the shining roofs,  
Pavilions that tremble as his hoofs  
Sound in the orchards where he stoops to hang  
Gold apples on high trees through which there rang  
Laughter like dropping water, till, sweet tears,  
The rain showers fell to dissipate their fears;  
Small suffering and short-lived pain distil  
This elixir of happiness, and still  
Among the drums and crystal gongs of rain  
Voices are calling and we know the rain

*Et in Arcadia, Omnes.*

Is ended, and the brilliant fruit begin  
To grow to fulness and to paint their skin.  
Daring the danger and the treacherous shore,  
They swim above the never-plundered store  
Of shadows, where the finished cup of sky  
Contains the waters, and the hills so high,  
They touch the trees that wave on the far bank,  
And shake the mirrored stillness of their rank.  
Green are the safest places in the grass  
To hide your comfort from the feet that pass,  
And little caves between the trees' green dark  
Give you their stillness, and no need to hark  
For prying voices, while near music rings  
To keep the people practising their wings,  
For while they tread the tight-rope of the tune  
And walk on air, through clouds, as if to prune  
These flowers which grow in clusters high above  
The leaf-marked waters, lying there to prove  
The strength of silver, or the lure of gold  
As night or day, with cowardly or bold  
Appearance bribes with white flowers the waves  
Or, with fierce countenance controls his slaves ;  
Others can rest motionless, apart,  
Until the moment for their play can start ;  
In " caverns," " leaf-hung bowers," or " grotts " they lie,  
And live their pastorals before the shy  
Pipes or piercing trumpets make this pretence  
No longer binding, and no more a fence.

*Et in Arcadia, Omnes.*

From other windows, other gods may lean,  
Their sons mark space with intervals of clean  
Waterfalls of rippling light, golden walls  
Protecting proud gods, echo through their halls  
New signs and symbols acted in the air,  
Unknown to us, but seen by clear eyes there ;  
And from the windows each can watch his son  
Leave Heavens of sparkling brilliance, to shun  
The drifting gardens with sweet-breathing trees  
Blown down the wide sky ; for they choose the lees  
And sifted dregs of goodness where they find  
Sweet fruits of conquest, and of loss, combined.

As soon as ever the deep woods are still,  
The hollow valley, and the hanging hill  
Murmur with liquid voices, till in turn  
The woods reply with fiery sounds that burn  
And cleanse the dim night, for the gods to reach  
Trees rising like green cliffs above a beach.  
The carriages arrive, release their load  
Beneath green arches, where the grass is mowed  
Smooth as the sea, and through its depth as clear ;  
The leaves, like men on cliffs, can gaze down sheer  
And watch, beneath the dancing boughs of waves,  
People leaving carriages like caves,  
Step into the sunlight, for a moment blind,  
Dazed by the dropping splendour that they find,

*Et in Arcadia, Omnes.*

They stagger like men in the far-flung spray  
Of the shivered waves on a stormy day,  
But the foam falling like snow down the air  
Is dust in wide beams of the sun, whose hair  
Gilds the blue zenith that he leaps along  
With lion-like limbs and loud voice so strong.

## A SWISS RHAPSODY.

TO THE NATIVE, MISS FRIEDA WIDMER.

L AUSANNE Station. 10.42. 9.42?  
Vevey Platform. 10.18. 9.18?  
Clock-work God who regulates this brew,  
Think where your passengers have been !  
Three different times. Three separate stages.  
Living, comatose or dead.  
On far-off continents, or under clouds  
Through showers of rain, in golden searchlights  
Pouring down to show the circle in the triangle,  
The rolling wheels of clocks set in the pyramids and spires.  
I see a town half-way between  
This station and the one we've left,  
And that yields yet another time  
Completing the set quadrature.  
Then this is North, East, South and West.  
Before I've time to think again,  
Taking a passport and a bag  
I jump a barrier and run.  
I choose a bearing and a cab  
And drive along an avenue,  
Five francs, desk, key, 348,  
And then I take my slippers and a dressing-gown.

## *A Swiss Rhapsody.*

I thought I'd interrupted Ezra  
Bathing in this Swiss Hotel,  
I looked again and saw it was  
An avalanche that fell.  
A mound of flesh, a gush of hair,  
A soul imprisoned in white tiles,  
But none the less I dreamed, I knew,  
And sure enough, my dreams came true.

TO THE TUNE OF THE MARCH FROM "WILLIAM TELL."

I am sure you will think that I say too much  
When I tell of the snow, and a heat so fierce  
So hot was the water when I turned the tap,  
I declare I forgot these were winter months.  
It was dark, but a new moon marked the skies, I'm sure  
that I saw it through the glass,  
I left the water, and took a towel, and tried to find it, but  
the glass was thick,  
Slipped on the floor, missed the mat, and fell, till at last  
I got up, too late to know,  
They rang a bell, and I seized my clothes, for I knew that  
they served table d'hôte but once.  
I was right . . . and I lost . . . I was late . . . they  
were cruel . . .  
. . . It was cold . . . not enough . . . they refused . . .  
and I left . . .  
I went to the window, below lay the lake  
And the lights of the town shone out through the night.

## *A Swiss Rhapsody.*

I said to myself, shall I buy some milk,  
To drink with the chocolate that they sell?  
The shops were shut . . . it was past ten  
Judging by the average time ;  
I was left hungry all that night,  
No use to grumble till the light ;  
I went to bed and tried hard to sleep,  
But was prevented by a thirst,  
I dreamed of icebergs served with spoons  
And felt a chagrin at their loss ;  
So hungry, so weary, the gold sky-signs  
Sang of a sixpenny cure for the world ;  
Just then I recovered, awoke, and remembered  
The fresh light flooded the curtained room.

The shepherd sang songs on the hills,  
The valleys echoed crystal bells,  
They answered many morning prayers  
And glided down the mountain rills.

EDITOR'S NOTE.—A letter from the Native, in appreciation of this poem, will be found at the end of the book.

## PROFITEER WILLIAMSON PURSUES CULTURE.

THE orange and vermilion lights  
Twinkle among the indigo trees,  
Williamson in violet tights  
Converses with the blonde marquise.  
Troops of parrots madly squawk,  
Streaming out of Africa.  
"Madame la marquise, will you walk  
Serenely into Asia?"  
Evidence of rumbling gongs,  
Peacock silk and porcelain.—  
Fat Jewesses roaring songs  
Surge and squeeze down Petticoat Lane.  
All the lanterns gaily swing,  
All the gongs and all the drums.—  
"Madame, hear these maidens sing  
Poignant lyrics of the slums!"  
"Shall we be grotesque?—and why,  
Madame, do you stint your mirth?  
In my country's service I  
Earned my bulbousness and girth."  
Tropical and sultry note  
In the night blared suddenly.—  
"Parrot, your conspicuous coat  
Is but protective mimicry!

*Profiteer Williamson Pursues Culture.*

Shall we indeed await the dawn,  
Or something else to talk about? "—  
The blonde marquise to hide a yawn  
Puts delicate lilac fingers out.

Williamson grows old again—  
Stares down at his sagging paunch.  
Dew is falling; a sudden pain  
Pierces his rheumatic haunch.

Rolling ships approaching port,  
Coloured seamen wreathed in smiles,  
Apes and birds of every sort  
Brought from garish, tropic isles.

Coloured seamen leave the sea.—  
Williamson becomes absurd.—  
"Coloured men, oh come to me!  
I will purchase many a bird!"

Lanterns out and music dumb,  
And the rain descending fast.—  
"Madame, if you will not come,  
I shall leave you to your past.

Everyone has gone to bed."—  
"Would that I were every one!"—  
"There is nothing to be said"—  
"There is nothing to be done."

## CAFÉ CONFIDENCES.

COFFEE—Cigarettes—Thick blue air—  
Restless walls heaving themselves about in discreet  
anglified cubism.

On the other side of the little table you were  
A smouldering spark and a thicket of black hair.  
And you talked—a farrago of considered cynicism.

If coffee be the food of love, say on !—  
There will be good men yet in Kensington !—  
Singular young woman, how you rattle on !  
What do you think about when you are alone ?  
Kensington bored you, the Slade formed you.  
Gloomy young woman of the Café, what make you here ?  
You should be picking buttercups in Devonshire.

You were saying ?—" considered as an anodyne,  
Brandy has qualities not found in wine.—  
If I am an intellectual, then I am an intellectual.  
I can't help it, can I ?

## *Café Confidences.*

Anyhow, what does it matter? The world will go round  
just the same.

It is just a silly game. Life gets flatter and flatter.

I contemplate it all with the vacant grin

Of an infant or an idiot. I shall soon be old.

Shall I soak my sick soul in a tumbler of gin?

My grandfather sold butter and cream in Tavistock market.

He fell in the road when he was drunk,

And all the wheels of all the carts from Tavistock market  
Rolled gaily over him.

Good old grandpapa! He had his spree

Each market-day for centuries.—Who would have thought

He'd help to put on the market a thing like me?

Sometimes I laugh about it quite a lot!"

## IMMANENCE.

**I**T is not only savour that does arise  
From that field whither the gulls follow the plough.  
The colour is not but colour, also quick  
Token of raw life, red-brown, a promise of  
Yield, earth passionate, clamouring to be sown.  
Earth salacious, genetrix of comical  
Worms and larvæ, Earth laughing at the people,  
She quiet, they vexed, litigating for her.  
Earth faithful nursing men with her milk of grain.  
Earth wanton in dangerous green of fat worts,  
Jewels, the flowers at her body's curves and  
Hollows, at mating month, the groupèd flowers  
Little yellow-frilled mouths that smell of white wine.  
Earth austere, submitting to the frosty rods  
Of January, defensive of her seed.  
Earth riddle maker under unlimited  
Stars, the god's eyes, pulling our souls down to her  
For her beauty, heart-breaking, now darkly seen,  
Now illumin'd, now gone. Earth whom cities do  
Explain a little, conquer not : godmother  
With gold and unexpected wells assuaging.

### *Immanence.*

Queen of green-haired tree spirits, and the spirits  
Of boulders, the robed in lichen, of still pools  
Where a wicked shadow is chained to the floor  
For punishment, of turfy downs : Hecate,  
Ephesian Dian, slim Adonis the chaste,  
Priape ; deliberate, of seeming caprice,  
The brooding one, looking alway to show forth  
More life and godhead, in metamorphosis  
Giving the resurrection of the body.  
Earth pungent, of unknown fury and desire  
In the green-growing things as much as beasts hunting  
Disposer (who proves not ?) of souls departed.

## THE KING'S DAUGHTER.

DODEKASYLLABICS.

THE garments of the King's daughter are of wrought gold.  
First, armour-heavy, her cloak of yellow plaques;  
Each have diff'rent gravure; chelydri, chimaerae,  
Sphinxes joined in battle, lycanthropes in love;  
The eyes are jewels, red or green, scales of nacre,  
Claws platinum inlaid. It is fringed with sapphires.

Within her dress is one piece crushing the breasts to  
Mountains marble white with wand'ring veins like blue ore.  
It is harsh with the cruelty of a thousand  
Diamonds sewn in cusps and volutes and arabesques.  
Harsher the intimate garments against her skin  
Woven in fine gold wire. (Her skin is like orchid.)

More penitential than the horse-hair shirt. As she  
Moves each point of gold chafes or pierces her white flesh;  
Yet proud, she bows, suffering from her palanquin  
(The Ethiops who carry it with huge muscles  
Suffer less). How gold and white against their black!

But the little women pandemic, whose one shift  
In blue with white stripes, shews the generous freedom  
Of round limbs stained apricot (and as downy and  
Warm as one ripening at midday) feeling the  
Torrid dust barefooted, jeer after her "Long live  
Princess Sarcophagus, who for all her gold is  
Charnel, a byword for the young men of the town."

## LOVE LYRIC.

**I** SOMETIMES love you as a convert, on the bench of penitents weeping, loves the stream of raw benediction that floods away his sin, shuddering in the delight of cleanness. At other times as a capriped, chasing you in the sunshine along a lonely, level beach, where my hoof-points send the brazen sand and brown-green fucus scattering; till I leap at you, grinning, fighting for breath, while you cling to the ground at first like a limpet, gasping in a way that suggests a giggle or a sob.

Sometimes I want, with you, to hire little back rooms, where the paper is torn downward like hangnails, for an hour.

On days when it is cold, and there is a great deal of business at the office, I don't love you at all.

## THE DAHLIA.

**I**NDOLENT in crimson plush the dahlia blooms beside the  
wall,  
Flaring soon after dawn on mist transmuted into motes of  
brass ;  
Like a mistress whom the years made terrible, and stark,  
and tall,  
She burns, loosening the slight but acrid smell of dahlias ;  
Or like a star that is a mouth with many lips in puckered  
lust,  
To drink the decadence of gold in foliage doomed to winter  
dust.

## THE SOUL'S DEFENCE.

THE soul has four gates to her hall  
Set to the four points cardinal :  
The first is the gate Boreal,  
The second gate Oriental,  
The third gate Meridional,  
The fourth, the gate Occidental.  
Now when these strong winds do arise  
Which encompass all paradise  
From the starless caves which see  
Neither God, nor his enemy,  
Winds braggart, winds most terrible  
That in a whining tune do tell  
Of domed blue vaults so vast, that He  
Loses from his inventory  
Many lost souls, and thinks them free,  
Or obscene winds an entry seek  
With suppliant clamour, soft and thick,  
Then in fear, and then in hate,  
She shuts her steel, her silver gate,  
Her gate of brass, her gate of gold  
Against these burning winds and cold,  
Ghostly enemies without form,  
Brewers of mischief in a storm,

## *The Soul's Defence.*

Who gabble in a wicked tongue  
When all sky is overhung  
With dull clouds and yellow scars,  
Sinister masters of the stars.  
Yet, if she be no prudent soul,  
But wanton, and conceiv'd a fool,  
She will admit such as do think  
For nothing but their meat and drink,  
Who would defile her house until,  
Mocking her, they take their fill  
Of her, consuming utterly  
More than her feeble harlotry,  
Slake themselves with all, and leave  
Nothing behind, nothing to grieve,  
Nothing but what is wreck'd and marr'd,  
The dead shadow, the broken shard,  
That messengers before the day  
Mercifully will sweep away.

## THE TOILETTE OF MYRRHINE.

**S**IESTA time is hot in Hell !  
Down the glittering shutters fell  
With a noise Arabian  
Like the rustling pearls that fan

The eyes of rajahs when they hide  
Beyond the incense-flowing tide  
Their majesty, all lonely save  
For the hot Nubian sun, their slave.

And like the lovely light gazelles  
Walking by deep water-wells,  
Shadows past her mirrors fleet  
Through bright trellises of heat.

Through the shutters fawning crept  
A barber zephyr, cringing stept  
Through the shutters fallen like water—  
Hiding Hell's most lovely daughter.

The sun, a ripened apricot,  
Still made the flattened roof-tops hot,  
And at her table preened and set  
Myrrhine sits at her toilette.

## *The Toilette of Myrrhine.*

"Madame Myrrhine, if you please,"  
Fawning said the barber breeze,  
"I will coiff as light as air  
That Arabian wind your hair.

Never had the perfumed seas  
Such bright grape-black curls as these  
Fallen like rustling pearls that run,  
Burnt by the hot Nubian sun,

From each elephantine trunk  
The waterfalls rear." Myrrhine shrunk,  
But now the barber zephyr curls  
Black cornucopias of pearls.

Upon the dressing-table, heat  
Is flaunting like a paroquet,  
And in the street dust-white and lean,  
Two black apes bear her palanquin.

Through the shutters see those apes'  
Eyes like green and golden grapes . . .  
Their falsetto voices made  
A false simian serenade.

The negress Dinah through unheard  
Shutters like the sun's gold gourd  
Bears her powder-puff—the breath  
Of an angel, a swan's death.

*The Toilette of Myrrhine.*

Never once Myrrhine replies  
To those apes with slanting eyes . .  
She died a thousand years ago—  
From dust her beauty ripened slow.

But Fanfreluche her parrot closes  
With the ballerina roses—  
Pecks them,—Dinah longs to snatch  
The night to make her beauty-patch.

## EIGHT MORE BUCOLIC POEMS.

### I

### EVENING.

PRINCE ABSOLAM and Sir Rotherham Redde  
Rock on a rocking-horse home to bed

With dreams like cherries ripening big  
Beneath the frondage of each wig.

In a flat field on the road to Sleep  
They ride together, a-hunting sheep

That like the swan-bright fountains seem ;  
Their tails hang down as meek as a dream.

Prince Absolam seems a long-fleeced bush,  
The heat's tabernacle, in the hush

And the glamour of eve, when buds the dew  
Into bright tales that never come true ;

And as he passes a cherry-tree  
Caught by his long hair, bound is he,

While all his gold fleece flows like water  
Into the lap of Sir Rotherham's daughter.

*Evening.*

Come then, and sit upon the grass  
With cherries to pelt you as bright as glass—  
Vermilion bells that sound as clear  
As the bright swans whose sighing you hear  
When they float to their crystal death  
Of water, scarcely plumed by the breath  
Of air,—so clear in the round leaves  
They look, this crystal sound scarce grieves  
As they pelt down like tears fall'n bright  
From music or some deep delight.  
The gardener cut off his beard of bast  
And tied up the fountain-tree, made it fast  
And bound it together till who can see  
Which is Prince Absolam, which is the tree?  
Only his gold fleece flows like water  
Into the lap of Sir Rotherham's daughter;  
Sir Rotherham Redde gathers bags of gold  
Instead of the cherries ruddy and cold.

II

THE FIVE MUSICIANS.

TO OSBERT.

THE blue-leaved fig-trees swell with laughter,  
Gold fissures split the ripe fruits after,

And like a gold-barred tiger, shade  
Leaps in the darkness that they made.

The long-ribbed leaves shed light that dapples  
Silenus like a tun of apples.

Gold-freckled, fruit-shaped faces stare  
At nymphs with bodies white as air.

The ancient house rocked emptily :  
"Horned brothers, creep inside and see

Through my tall windows : the abode  
Of noise is on the dusty road."

They creep . . . strange hands are on the hasp . . .  
Silenus sleepy as a wasp

## *The Five Musicians.*

Amid the fruit-ripe heat as in  
An apricot or nectarine,

Replies, " The dust is wise and old. . . .  
For glistening fruits and Ophir's gold .

Are gathered there to wake again  
In our flesh, like a tune's refrain."

The five musicians with their bray  
Shatter the fruit-ripe heat of day ;

Their faces wrinkled kind and old  
Are masked by the hot sun with gold ;

Like fountains of blue water, gush  
Their beards. Strange-feathered birds that hush

Their song, move not so proud as these  
Smiles floating, ageless courtesies.

They stand upon the dust outside ;  
Their tunes like drops of water died.

Yet still we hear their slow refrain,  
" King Pharaoh, gay lad, come again !"

Miss Nettybun, beneath the tree,  
Perceives that it is time for tea

And takes the child, a muslined moon,  
Through the lustrous leaves of afternoon.

*The Five Musicians.*

And tea-time comes with strawberry  
Jam,—yet where, oh, *where*, is she?

On that music floating, gone  
To China and to Babylon;

Never again she'll go to bed  
In the house of Sir Rotherham Redde!

III

KING COPHETUA AND THE  
BEGGAR MAID.

TO ALAN PORTER.

THE five-pointed crude pink tinsel star  
Laughed loudly at King Cophetua ;

Across the plain as black as mind  
And limitless, it laughed unkind

To see him whitened like a clown  
With the moon's flour, come in a golden crown.

The moon shone softer than a peach  
Upon the round leaves in its reach ;

The dark air sparkled like a sea—  
The beggar maid leaned out through a tree

And sighed (that pink flower-spike full of honey),  
“ Oh, for Love, ragged as Time, with no money ! ”

Then through the black night the gardener's boy,  
As sunburnt as hay, came whispering, “ Troy

*King Cophetua and the Beggar Maid.*

Long ago was as sweet as the honey-chimes  
In the flower-bells jingling into rhymes,

And, oh, my heart's sweet as a honey-hive  
Because of a wandering maid, and I live

But to tend the pale flower-bells of the skies  
That shall drop down their dew on her sleeping eyes."

IV

CLOWN ARGHEB'S SONG.

CLOWN ARGHEB the honey-bee  
Counted his money, " See  
In the band-stand in Hell,  
Buzzing, the tunes that fell  
Raise up glass houses, round  
Serres chaudes as forcing ground  
Lest bald heads harden  
In Hell's kitchen garden.  
Poet and pedagogue  
Bump their bald heads agog—  
(Melon and marrow,  
And cucumber narrow).  
Next day comes Proserpine,  
Parasol raised, and ' See,  
Ma'am,' says the gardener, ' these  
Thoughts are as thick as peas ! ' "  
So sighed the clown, singing  
Buzz, and still clinging  
To no horizontal bars,  
But the pink freezing stars !

V

FLEECING TIME.

QUEEN VENUS, like a bunch of roses,  
Fat and pink that splashed dew closes,

Underneath dark mulberry trees,  
Wandered with the fair-haired breeze.

Among the dark leaves preening wings  
Sit golden birds of light ; each sings,

“ Will you accept the blue muslin ? ”  
As they peck the blackamoor mulberries’ skin.

Then came a sheep like a sparkling cloud ;  
“ Oh, ma’am, please, ma’am, sleek me proud,

Come fleece and comb my golden wool,  
And do not mind, ma’am, if you pull ! ”

Her flocks came thick as the mulberries  
That grow on the dark, clear mulberry trees,

As thick as the daisies in the sky . . .  
Prince Paris, Adonis ; as each passed by,

She cried, “ Come feed on buds as cold  
As my fleeced lamb-tailed river’s gold,

*Fleecing Time.*

And you shall dance like each golden bird  
Of light that sings in dark trees unheard.

And you shall skip like my lamb-tailed river,  
In my buttercup fields for ever."

The lady Venus, with hair thick as wool,  
Cried, "Come and be fleeced,—each sheepish fool!"

VI

THE HIGHER SENSUALISM.

QUEEN CIRCE, the farmer's wife at the Fair,  
Met three sailor-men stumping there,

Who came from the parrot-plumed sea, Yeo-Ho!  
And each his own trumpet began to blow.

"We come," said they, "from the Indian seas,  
All bright as a parrot's feathers, and these

Break on gold sands of the perfumed isles,  
Where the fruit is soft as a siren's smiles,

And the sun is as black as a Nubian.  
We have singed the beard of the King of Spain. . . .

Then we wandered once more on the South Sea strand  
Where the icebergs seem Heavenly Mansions fanned

By the softest winds from the groves of spice,  
And the angels like birds of paradise

Flit; there we caught this queer-plumaged boy  
(An angel, he calls himself) for a toy."

. . . . .  
The angel sighed. "Please, ma'am, if you'll spare  
Me a trumpet, the angels will come to the Fair,

## *The Higher Sensualism.*

For even an angel must have his fling,  
And ride on the roundabout, in the swing !”

She gave him a trumpet, but never a blare  
Reached the angels from Midsummer Fair,

Though he played, “ Will you hear a Spanish lady,”  
And “ Jack the Sailor,” “ Sweet Nelly,” “ Trées shady ”—

For only the gay hosannas of flowers  
Sound, loud as brass bands, in those heavenly bowers.

Queen Circe, the farmer’s wife, said, “ I will buy  
Your plumaged coat for my pig to try—

Then with angels he’ll go a-dancing hence,  
From sensuality into sense !”

The Fair’s tunes like cherries and apricots  
Ripened ; the angels danced from their green grots ;

Their hair was curled like the fruit on the trees. . . .  
Rigaudon, sarabande, danced they these.

And the pig points his toe and he curves his wings,  
The music starts and away he flings—

Dancing with angels all in a round,  
Hornpipe and rigaudon on the Fair’s ground.

VII

FALSETTO SONG.

**B**ETWEEN the hairy leaves trills dew  
All tasting of fresh green anew,  
And, baskets of ripe fruit in air  
The bird-songs seem, suspended where  
Like any feathered shrieking biped  
Or creaking water brightly striped  
I stand and let my laughter flare  
Beneath my waspish gilded hair.  
My tame asses' tee-hee-hee  
Mimics the striped zebra sea  
As it munches all the land—  
The real ground whereon we stand :  
" No eagle was it, but a hen  
Pecked Prometheus' fire-heart when  
Counting chicks before they hatched  
The farmer's gay wife left unlatched  
The door of the crazy hen-coop Laughter--  
Never closing ever after ! "

VIII

THE FAT WOMAN.

THE velvet-black trees just behind  
Have cast no shadow on my mind;  
My whirring gilt hair, clear as flutes,  
Seems cornucopias of fruits;  
That negroid satyr the hot wind  
With his long fingers cannot find  
His way among my chins, whose shapes  
Seem bunches of hot glowing grapes.—  
The roses blaze like scarlet fire,  
The ivy leaves are black as ire  
And bird songs are suspended there  
Like coloured hoops upon the air  
Through which reverberate the lights  
In splintered glassy stalactites—  
Those lights that sting me waspishly  
As by the gentian-coloured sea  
I amble, waves of coloured flesh  
Fantastically curled afresh.  
I amble past, I muse and see  
The placid world's rotundity

*The Fat Woman.*

Made in my image, fat and round  
And matronly; the shy rebound  
Of space from contact seems to me  
The most sincere of flattery—  
A virtuous vacancy that thieves  
All colour from the world that lives—  
Yields like my mind where nought can make  
The least impression it will take.



## PRESS CUTTINGS.

*The Saturday Review*.—"The vanguard of British poetry. They are a portent."

*The Nation*.—"Harpies like nightingales, and nightingales like harpies, chirping balefully upon the walls of old Babylon."

*The Lancet*.—"We are sorry about the appendix! . . . Anything to give pain!"

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*Morning Post*.—"We have no doubt whatever that, fifty years hence, the publication of 'Wheels' will be remembered as a notable event in the inner history of English Literature."

*Weekly Dispatch* (former literary régime).—"The publication of 'Wheels' is regarded by all right-minded people as more a society event than a literary one." [Editor's Note.—My dear Sir, if you lived in Bayswater, as I do, you would realise how perfectly charming you have been!]



R.I.P. TOPSY JONES,

Who died defending "A Common Cause."

(Editor's Note.—*Very.*)

1919.

"Your memory is like a well-loved book  
Wherein we go continually to look."

(Editor's Note.—The memorial verse is from the lady's published translations, and was once, alas, poor youth, Albert Samain.)

## A TRAGEDY OF REACTION.

It was a super-poet of the neo-Georgian kind  
Whose fantasies transcended the simple bourgeois mind,  
And by their frank transgression of all the ancient rules  
Were not exactly suited for use in infant schools.

But, holding that no rebel should shrink from fratricide,  
His gifted brother-Georgians he suddenly defied,  
And in a manifesto extremely clear and terse  
Announced his firm intention of giving up free verse.

The range of his reaction may readily be guessed  
When I mention that for BROWNING his devotion he  
    confessed,  
Enthroned above the SITWELLS the artless Muse of  
    " BAB,"  
And said that MARINETTI was not as good as CRABBE.

At first the manifesto was treated as a joke,  
A boyish ebullition that soon would end in smoke;  
But when he took to writing in strict and fluent rhyme  
His family decided to extirpate the crime.

Two scientific doctors declared he was insane,  
But likely under treatment his reason to regain ;  
So he's now in an asylum, where he listens at his meals  
To a gramophone recital of the choicest bits from  
    " Wheels."

## BIBLIOGRAPHY.

**Aldous Huxley.**     *THE BURNING WHEEL.*

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“Without any doubt an original poet.”—*The Nation*.

*THE DEFEAT OF YOUTH.*

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*LEDA*. Just Published. CHATTO AND WINDUS.

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. . . seems to me a pretty satisfying one . . . They were the first Englishmen of letters to exhibit the war in the dress in which generations of their countrymen will assuredly see it. . . . They, and they alone, subduing their artists' sense to this debt of service to humanity, but giving it also its due vesture of grace and freedom in expressing to unthinking, unhearing England what it meant."—*The Nation* (Wayfarer).

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#### OUR STYLISTS

*The People's Palace* purports to be a collection of verse by Sacheverell Sitwell. Its sheer inanity is beyond description. The audacity of wasting precious paper, to say nothing of printing ink, on such unadulterated drivel take (*sic*) one's breath away."—*The World*.

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*Letter from the Native to the Editor of "Wheels" re "The Swiss Rhapsody."*

" 12 Herzogstrasse,  
Berne.

" DEAR MISS EDITH,

Juste I received the lovely poème from Mr. Sacheveril about Switzerland when he was traveling from Italie through Simplon Lausanne Genève. Really I am enjoying very much to read this poème there I am Native from this Country. Since like Schiller the great poet from Germany when he was travelling in the wundervoll Lake from Lucerne and write this work from Wilhelm Tell. I should be very pleased when to have some more poèm from Mr. Sachvell Sitwell about Switzerland.

" I am remain,

" Your sincerely,

" FRIEDA WIDMER."

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NOTE.—The Editor of "Wheels" will shortly answer *all* the attacks in a pamphlet to be published separately. The attackers are properly in for it.

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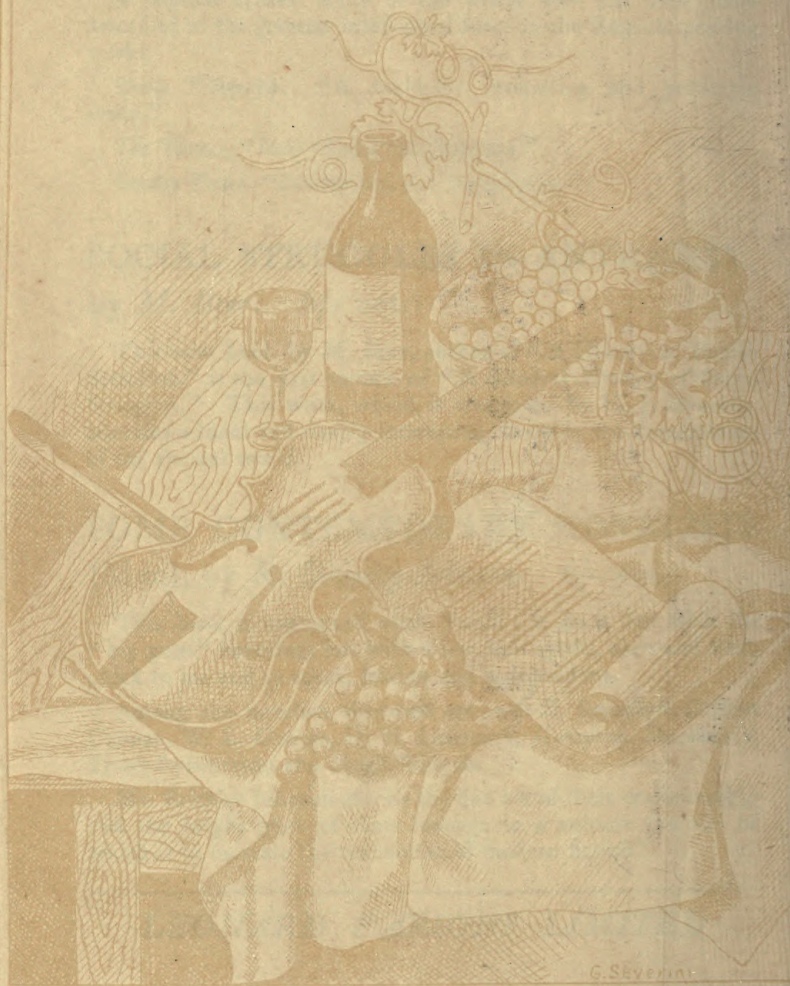
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